1: Gorer J-5 (1937)1938 AK5 Lepcha AK5
Nepal AK1
Sikkim AK3

Although they have not been influenced by Europeans the Lepchas have been very greatly influenced and their ways of life much modified by the contact and pressure of their more highly developed neighbours, the Sikkimese, the Nepali, and above all the Tibetans. The extent of this modification is almost incalculable, owing to the fact that there is no precise information available about these neighbouring societies. Tibet is, I suppose, the most written-about country in the world, but none of the literature that I know of is sufficiently detailed to allow comparisons between the Lepchas and any equivalent Tibetan group. Although there are many books on lamaism I have found none which describes the Lhatsun-pa subsect of the Nyingma-pa sect—the variation followed in Lingthem monastery—so that it is impossible to state definitely whether the Lepchas have ignored or considerably modified any aspect or aspects of the religion to which they have been converted. It is as though an investigator were trying to find out about Baptists and could only get information about Christianity in general, with some of the more obvious distinctions between Roman Catholicism and Protestantism noted.

With regard to the Sikkimese and non-Gurkha Nepali the situation is in some respects simpler; there is practically no information of any sort available about them. The *Gazeteer of Sikkim* published over forty years ago, contains some generalised statements about the habits of the Sikkimese; and the writings[9] and conversation of Major C. J. Morris who had studied the Gurkha soldiers under his command have given me information on certain points. Despite this slight help it is impossible in nearly every instance to state with any sort of certainty whether a given custom, belief or story is confined to the Lepchas, is shared by them with some other tribe, or has been relatively recently introduced from without. On the whole the only available source of information has been Lepcha tradition. Until other tribes in the same area have been studied (and the fact that Nepal, Bhutan and Tibet are practically closed to Europeans makes such studies in the near future problematical) precise questions of culture contact must remain unanswered.

The Lepchas are a mongoloid people, with, it would seem, slightly more pronounced Mongolian features, fairer complexions and greater stature than their present neighbours. Many of the children have carroty or auburn hair, but the hair of adults is always

[9] *Handbooks for the Indian Army: Gurkhas.* By Major C. J. Morris. Delhi 1937.

1: Gorer J-5 (1937)1938 AK5 Lepcha AK5

854 pletely freely; sometimes, however, if it is sunny and the baby is sleeping the cloth will be pulled out over the baby's head so as to support the head more firmly against the body of the carrier.

For the first eighteen months or two years at the smallest reckoning the baby is continually carried when out of doors and is only put on the floor inside its own house. Unless the baby is a first or only child it should be able to walk slightly by about two years and should not need carrying after thirty months, if it is in good health. Of course if the children are ill they will be carried much later; and the youngest child, or an only child, is liable to be carried very much ~~longer~~. When babies start to crawl they are usually laid somewhere near the mother while she is working, or near somebody else who can keep an eye on them. It occasionally happens that babies will crawl to the fire and burn or scald themselves; Aga's son was scalded and Chelim has a permanent scar from burning. It is, however, very seldom that crawlers get wounded in this way among the Lepchas; among the Nepali Major Morris says that [171] there is scarcely a grown-up who does not carry scars from childhood burns.

It is considered that the use of a cradle would be fatal to Lepcha children, and they are normally never used. There is, however, one exception to this rule; the family line of Mrs. Datoop have the custom of employing Nepali cradles (these are small cradles on rockers which can be carried); she herself was reared in one and reared all her children in them. She is the most independent, self-willed, and competent woman in Lingthem; of her three sons the eldest, Pembu, is exceptionally nervous, and the other two notably independent. The daughters, who have married back into their mother's community, I saw too little of to judge. Since there is only this one family, and since Mrs. Datoop is herself such a strong personality, it is quite impossible to decide whether the use of the cradle, with its somewhat greater freedom of movement and its slight restriction of contact with other bodies, had any influence on the formation of the characters of these rather exceptional people.

Except in the first few weeks of its life a child who is not an eldest or only child does not receive exclusive attention from its mother; the mother is the only woman who feeds it, but a great part of its time is usually spent in the company of elder siblings. [857] Children are more often carried by women than men; in a mixed family the elder daughters spend much more time looking after their younger siblings than their brothers do. If, however, the first child

2: Morris T-5 (1937)1938 AK5 Lepcha AK5

539 passed the spot was safe: he would be eaten up at once. The monster was never satisfied, and was causing trouble all over the place. Because of this the gods decided to send down Phapay Jumpa Yung, who was to remain and control it. Immediately on reaching the earth this god assumed a form identical with the *tanen*, only very much bigger. It had no difficulty in swallowing the *tanen* whole, which it did as soon as the two met. From inside the god's stomach the *tanen* started to grumble at the harsh treatment meted out to it; and so Phapay Jumpa Yung, who was really a compassionate being, at once excreted it on to the ground. As soon as it came to itself again Phapay addressed it thus: "You have eaten up all the people of this neighbourhood, and have done a great deal of damage of every kind. If, in future, you do not obey me implicitly I shall eat you again; and the next time I do so you will remain inside my stomach. If, however, you do as you are told I will give you the control of thirty devils. In order to do this, however, you must remain for ever on the earth."

The *tanen* agreed to do what was asked of it and has remained in the world ever since. That is why, when any of the thirty devils concerned is troubling a person, it is necessary to offer a Go-sum.

* * * * *

539 171 With very few alterations this story could be made to read like a tract; but I should be surprised to find that a missionary took any part in its invention! Its real interest, however, lies in the fact that it incorporates most of the known historical details concerning the construction of the famous Bodhnath stupa in Nepal. I was unaware of this at the time, and only came across the connection on my return from Sikkim, when I was reading through Waddell. It is of considerable psychological interest to note the difference between the oral Lepcha version of the story and that given in the printed booklet which is sold to pilgrims at the stupa; and for this reason I give below Waddell's translation in

2: Morris T-5 (1937)1938 AK5 Lepcha AK5

full. It seems to have been purged of all its coarser details; or were they added by the Lepchas? I think this is not unlikely; and that they have also incorporated the story of the Go-sum, which receives no mention in the printed version.

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"This stupa enshrines the spirit of the Buddhas of the ten directions, and of the Buddhas of three times (i.e., the present, past and future), and of all the Bodhisats, and it holds the Dharmakaya.

"When king Thi-Sron Detsan asked the Guru, at Samyas, to tell him the history of the *Ma-gu-ta* stupa in Nepal, made by the four sons of 'the bestower of gifts,' named 'the poor mother Pya-rdsi-ma (fowl-keeper),' then the Guru thus related (the story):—

"In a former Kalpa—time beyond conception—the Bodhisattva Mahasattva Avalokitesvara, approached the Tathagatha Akitabha and prayed for the animals immersed in the miry slough, and after saving these he went to mount Potala. There he saw hosts of unsaved animals, innumerable like unto mounds of *murwa* lees, and (seeing this) he wept. Two of his pitying tears were born into Indra's heaven as god's daughters, named respectively Kan-ma and the little Kan-ma or Kan-chun-ma. This latter having stolen in heaven some flowers, was as a punishment reborn in earth, in a low pigherd's family in Maguta in Nepal, under the name of Samvara or 'the Chief Happiness,' her mother's name being Purna. On marriage she had four sons, and her husband's early death left her with the sole care of the family. She with her family undertook the herding and rearing of geese for the wealthy, and having in this pursuit amassed much wealth, the Ma-pya-rdsi-ma (or mother fowl-keeper) decided to build a large stupa in honour of the Tathagatha. She, thereon, went to the king and begged for a site, saying she wanted only so much ground as one hide could cover. The king assented, saying '*Ja-rum*,' which literally means 'do' + 'can,' i.e. 'you can do (so).' Then she, cutting a

2: Morris T-5 (1937)1938 AK5 Lepcha AK5

539 hide into thin thongs (forming a long rope), enclosed that
● 171 very large space which now is occupied by this chaitya. And she, with her four sons, and a servant, and an elephant and an ass, as beasts of burden, brought earth and stones, and commenced to build this chaitya by their own personal labour.

"Then the king's ministers appealed to the king to stop such an ambitious building, as they asserted its magnificence put to shame the religious buildings of the king and the nobles. But the king answered '*Ka-Sor*'—which literally means 'mouth + (has) spoken'—and so refused to interfere. (Thus is the name of the stupa—'*Ja-rum K'a-sor*'—accounted for.)

"After four years, when only the base had been laid, the mother died, but her four sons continued the building till its completion. And in the receptacle was placed one Magadha measure (drona) of the relics of the Tathagatha Kasyapa. This event was celebrated by the manifestation in the sky, above the stupa, of Kasyapa himself, and the circles of celestial Buddhas and Bodhisats, and their hosts of retinue, and amongst showers of flowers the gods contributed divine music and rained perfume. Earthquakes thrice occurred, and through the glory of the assembled divinities there was no darkness for five nights.

"One of the sons then prayed, 'May I in my next re-birth be born as a great scholar (to benefit mankind),' and he was born as Thumni Sambhota (the introducer of the so-called 'Tibetan' character, and the first translator of Indian Buddhist texts into Tibetan, *circa* A.D. 650.

"The second son prayed in a similar manner, and was reborn as 'The Bodhisattva' (the abbot of the first monastery of Tibet).

"Then the elephant or *lan-po* (hearing these prayers) said, 'These two, neglecting me who contributed so much assistance, are asking all the good things for themselves, therefore let me be re-born in a form to destroy them or their work.' And he was afterwards re-born as Lan-darma (the persecutor of Lamaism).

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"The third son, hearing the elephant's request, 'prayed that he might be re-born in a form to neutralise the evil of the elephant's incarnation; and he was born as Lho-lun phel kyi dorje (the Lama who murdered Lan-darma, the Julian of Lamaism).'

"This stupa is also worshipped by the Nepalese Buddhists, viz., the Newars, the semi-aborigines of the Nepal valley, and the Murmi, a cis-Himalayan branch of Tibetan stock. The name 'Maguta'—pronounced 'Makuta'—is doubtless a contraction for *Makuta bandhana*, the pre-Buddhist 'crested chaitya,' such as existed at Buddha's death at Kusinagara, in the country of the Mallas."

* * * * *

The Go-sum is a strong and very potent cure, and is believed never to fail when correctly prescribed. It can be used to cure illness caused by no less than thirty different devils; also to counteract the effects of evil fortune, when this is "sent" by other humans through the medium of any of these same thirty demons. To ascertain when a Go-sum is necessary reference may be made to a book called *Kukdzeu*. This is a sort of Tibetan "Home doctor," and something like the medieval European books of witchcraft; a strange compound of magic and medicine. I should like, however, to make it clear that the Lepcha does not regard cures of this sort as magic. In his view this is definitely medical science. Provided the diagnosis has been correct the cure is merely a matter of carrying out the prescribed ceremony. In the same way that we are convinced that germs are killed by antiseptics, so does the sick Lepcha know that the offering of a Go-sum will cure him, provided his disease has been caused by any one of the thirty demons over which it has control. Should a patient not recover it is due not to any lack of potency in the Go-sum but to a mistaken diagnosis, a state of affairs which is, after all, not entirely unknown in the West!

I have been told that the Go-sum is unknown in Tibet

2: Morris T-5 (1937)1938 AK5 Lepcha AK5

and have found no reference to it in any of the books on that country. In view of the fact that the word is pure Tibetan, one would have expected to find it mentioned. Anyone witnessing the ceremony must have been struck by the peculiarities of the figure itself: but there has been no modern account of Tibetan social life, and it is possible that if any of the earlier travellers saw a Go-sum he may have considered it too shocking to describe! The ceremony is no longer carried out by Lepchas in the Kalimpong district, where missionary influence is strong, but is popular all over Sikkim, where it is held in great esteem by Lepchas and Tibetans alike.

Here is an example of treatment of a different kind. Chano's wife had been unwell for several weeks, but was suffering from no specific illness. Her husband, however, who was himself a Lama, thought there might be something wrong and asked Tafoor to work out a horoscope for the next few months. He did this in our presence; but in order to make it intelligible it is necessary to understand something of the chronological system current in Tibet, as it is used for indicating lucky and unlucky times as well as the times for much of the worship. Except in official correspondence with the outside world it is in use all over Sikkim.

"The Tibetan system of reckoning time, derived from China and India, is based upon the twelve-year and sixty-year cycles of Jupiter. The twelve-year cycle is used for short periods, and the particular year, as in the Chinese style, bears the name of one or other of the twelve cyclic animals:—

1 Mouse (Rat)	1912*	5 Dragon	1916	9 Monkey	1920
2 Ox	1913	6 Serpent	1917	10 Bird (Hen)	1921
3 Tiger	1914	7 Horse	1918	11 Dog	1922
4 Hare (Kite)	1915	8 Sheep	1919	12 Pig	1923,
					1935 and so on.

* The names of animals in brackets are Lepcha variants of the standard Tibetan years. The date opposite each is given as an example of one particular cycle.

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"And in the case of the sixty-year cycle these animals are combined with the five elements (namely: Wood, Fire, Earth, Iron and Water), and each element is given a pair of animals, the first being considered male and the second female. . . . It is by giving a realistic meaning to the several animals and elements, after which the year is named, that the Lamas arrive at their endless variety of combinations of attraction and repulsion in regard to the casting of horoscopes and the prescriptions of requisite worship and the offerings necessary to counteract the evils thus brought to light."

The twelve-year cycle is known as *Lukor* and every Lepcha is taught the name of the animal corresponding to the year of his birth. For this reason it is possible to compute a person's age with considerable accuracy, an unusual state of affairs in a primitive society. An example will make the working of the system clear: Chimpit was born in the "Pig" year, which came round in the cycle in 1899, 1911, 1923 and 1935. His birth can therefore be definitely placed in 1923. With very old people the computation of ages is more difficult, for it is not always easy to decide whether a person is, for instance, seventy-two or eighty-four. But even so, one is unlikely to be more than twelve years out and can generally arrive at the exact age by comparing the estimate with the known age of some other person.

This same twelve-year cycle is also used by the Gurungs, a tribe inhabiting the southern slopes of the central Nepal Himalaya, as a result of which they are the only Gurkhas whose ages can be computed with accuracy.*

The following treatment which Tafoor prescribed for Chano's wife is preventive rather than curative; it may be compared with the sort of instructions that a doctor gives his patient after a general overhaul.

The patient is being troubled by Dade Mung, a demon sent by some other person. There is also trouble from Tumsi,

* Cf. my *Handbooks for the Indian Army: "Gurkhas,"* Chapter 7.

2: Morris T-5 (1937)1938 AK5 Lepcha AK5

[713] Tafoor does not himself stoop to the practice of love magic,
756 and I gather that it is considered beneath the dignity of any
932 Lama of position. It is much more commonly done by a Mun; and in this case the procedure is slightly different. A small portion of the hair of both the parties is again necessary. The Mun twists the pieces together, puts them into a clean plate in front of him, and concentrates and chants throughout one whole night. This is known as *Nangyong Hyok*. It is possible to have the ceremony done in order to seduce some other person's wife or husband, but is generally only resorted to when an already married couple do not get on well together. It is not unknown for parents to have the ceremony done on behalf of children when they marry; and especially is this the case in a *mariage de convenance*. Should a mistake be made, and the wrong hair given, nothing can be done to prevent or nullify the effect: the two people concerned will be bound to fall in love. I have often wondered what would happen should the hair of two men be mixed.

● 171 Love magic does not appear to be commonly practised in Tibet, for none of the books on Lamaism makes any mention of it. It is, however, very popular with most Hindus, particularly Brahmans, who are frequently in the habit of taking wives young enough to be their daughters. It is popular in all parts of Nepal, where Brahman influence is strong, and has, I imagine, been incorporated into Sikkim Lamaism through contact with the people of that country.

751 Amulets are called *Sung-Bo* or *Ka-Wo*, and are of many
777 different kinds. Some of these are Tibetan, others come from Nepal or Bhutan, but all are in common use by Lepchas.

Tse-Sung are amulets for prolonging life and warding off the dangers which threaten it, while *Rim-Sung* are worn only in times of epidemics. *Kunthup-Sung* are used to ward off all sorts of general evil. *Za-Sung* is a charm for epilepsy and is worn only by those who are afflicted by this disease, in order to prevent its attacks. *Sipaha* is an amulet worn by those

2: Morris T-5 (1937)1938 AK5 Lepcha AK5

the child. Throughout Nepal used railway tickets are nowadays much used for the same purpose; but this particular charm does not appear yet to have reached Sikkim.

Amongst Lepchas, Limboos, and Sherpas, as well as Tibetans, strings of snail-shells are worn on the necks and wrists of children, and are sometimes fastened to their clothes. These are places for the soul to hide in, should the child be attacked by an evil spirit. They are often worn up to the age of seven or eight, after which the soul is considered capable of looking after itself.

The following natural objects are considered to have magical qualities, and for this reason are often made up into charms. The use of some of them probably originated in Nepal; but, like most of the other charms and amulets from that country, they are highly prized by Lepchas.

Black cats' placenta; tigers' whiskers, preferably obtained while the animal is not quite dead; tigers' claws and collar-bones; armadillo scales; the horn or hoof of rhinoceros; the milk of a tigress; the placenta of elephants and rhinoceros; bears' claws; wolves' tongues; musk; bears' gall-bladders; and finally, various plants and herbs, particularly if they have been blessed and consecrated at auspicious moments by strolling Lamas.

These things are worn mostly by women and children, and are thought to ward off the evil eye and the effects of sorcery. They are particularly efficacious in guarding against the evil desires of envious neighbours; but are also considered effective in counteracting any possible harm which might result from a stranger looking on at the time of eating.

The products of the rhinoceros are, of course, in great demand all over India. They are believed by Hindus, for instance, to have a purifying effect, and make offerings of water acceptable to the spirits of ancestors. Their use is restricted to the higher castes, and only those who take no alcohol may use them. Hindus of lower caste may make use of rhinoceros horn in their worship; but in this case are

2: Morris T-5 (1937)1938 AK5 Lepcha AK5

825 expected to become teetotallers. Amongst orthodox Hindus
171 it is only the horn which is considered of any value. To the ignorant masses, however, all parts of the animal are sacred; and the creatures' keeper at the Calcutta Zoo is said to earn a substantial bonus by the regular sale of its excrements, for which the demand exceeds the daily supply!

The gall-bladders of bears are not in much demand in India proper, but considerable quantities are annually exported. I was once travelling on the Nepal border when I came across a large party of Tibetans. There was nothing unusual in this; but when I strolled up to talk to them I noticed a large pile of silver dollars on the ground. These men, it appeared, spent the whole of each summer touring through Nepal in search of bears' gall-bladders. When they had collected a sufficient quantity they took them to China, where they are much prized as aphrodisiacs. With the money received they bought up turquoise, for which there is a great demand in Tibet; and their surplus cash they changed into Singapore dollars. These, on account of their size (rather larger than the ordinary Indian rupee), they were able to dispose of in Nepal at a price much in excess of their actual exchange value, there to be mounted as female ornaments. Many Tibetans, so they told me, are at present engaged in this trade.

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776 In addition to the treatment of private individuals, certain ceremonies are carried out from time to time in order to ensure the general good health of the village as a whole. They usually take place in spring and autumn, when the change of season often results in a mild epidemic of colds or dysentery. These ceremonies are prophylactic; like our own daily gargle in the influenza season.

The *Cherim*, with a note on which I started this book, was one such ceremony. It took place towards the end of March and was carried out by both Lamas and Mun, and in the presence of most of the village.

2: Morris T-5 (1937)1938 AK5 Lepcha AK5

865 flower," or show it some other thing to attract its attention.
[861] When it is old enough to understand what is said it may sometimes be necessary to frighten it: *Kunjyong di-nong* is a phrase commonly used for this purpose, and may be roughly translated as, "Look out! the bogey man is after you!"; but apart from this, it is very generally believed that it is wrong to frighten young children.

[856] The baby starts to crawl when it is about six months old,
854 but it is not stood up until it is about a year, three or four months after which it commences to walk. Inside the house the baby is usually left to crawl about at its own free will: otherwise it is carried on someone's back, with its legs straddled round the waist, until it is about two-and-a-half years old, or even later if it is a youngest child. When the mother is working in the fields the baby remains in position on her back, where it soon learns to sleep peacefully while being constantly bumped about. Inside the house one of
[857] the other children will usually keep an eye on it; otherwise the parents will take turns in doing this. Baskets and cradles are seldom used: when it is necessary to put the baby down it is merely placed on a cloth on the floor or ground; but it is never swaddled. I should say that the average Lepcha child is much more carefully looked after than the corresponding Nepali child. It is very unusual to see a Gurkha without scars on the head, the result of falling into the fire as a baby; but I never saw a single case of this amongst the Lepchas. It may possibly be due to the fact that in Lepcha
[354] houses the hearth is raised about a foot above the level of
● 171] the floor, where it is thus out of reach of very small children, whereas the Nepali hearth is generally on the same level as the ground.

856 A baby can always toddle about before it starts to talk; and from the sounds it makes, when it is about four or five months old, it is easy to judge whether it will start to speak at the normal time. The speech of an average child, however, will not be intelligible until it is three. Up to this
[198] time it is spoken to in a special baby language, of which

5:Nebesky-Wojkowitz and Gorer E.J-5 (1937, 1950)1951
AK5 Lepcha AK5
Tibet AJ1

When constructing the thread-crosses,
strict rules concerning their colour, the way of arranging and knotting the coloured strings, etc. must be observed according to orthodox traditions. While the work is progressing, prayers and magic syllables (*dhāranis*) are chanted and the officiating priest breathes from time to time upon the structure.

Besides the sticks, coloured thread and tufts of wool, used for the construction of thread-crosses, several other objects are often required in these ceremonies. They are: various skulls of animals—thus at the ceremony of "closing the door of the sky demons" the *mDos* is fastened to a dog's skull, while in the rite "closing the door against the earth demons" a ram's skull is used instead—furthermore flat wooden sticks, covered with rough drawings of various emblems and images. These sticks, which are called Tamshing (*Khram shing*)[10] by the Tibetans, were originally used by Bŏn priests as important objects in their ceremonies. Other related instruments are sticks with tufts of white or coloured wool on top and in the middle, called Yetag (*Yas btags*), cones made of dough—termed Torma,[11] *gTor ma*—and images made of butter with the help of wooden moulds (*Zan par*). When preparing a base for the *mDos*, earth, straw and grass are used to build a series of square platforms, usually four in number, superimposed one on top of the other in decreasing size. On top of this the principal thread-cross is usually planted. This arrangement and some of the ideas connected with the various parts of the *mDos* itself show a certain parallel to the ideas connected with the symbolism of the Buddhist Chŏtens[12] (*mChhod rten*, Skr. Stūpa).

So far little authentic information on the original use of the *mDos* has been obtained from Tibetan sources; additional evidence on this subject can be, however, obtained from some neighbours of the Tibetans. It is well known to-day, that many of the neighbouring tribes, especially in the south and south-east professed or even still profess a religion, which seems to be very similar to the Tibetan Bŏn faith. The most comprehensive evidence on this question

5:Nebesky-Wojkowitz and Gorer E,J-5 (1937, 1950) 1951
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is to be found in the religious beliefs and customs of the ¹Na—²khi tribe, who have been previously confused with the Mo-so. The ¹Na—²khi, a branch of the ancient Ch'iang live to-day in Southwest China around Likiang, their former capital. This tribe was carefully studied by Dr. J. F. Rock over a period of more than twenty years. Dr. Rock translated the greatest part of the comprehensive literature of the ¹Na—²khi and analyzed their religious ceremonies; thereby he showed that this tribe preserved in its beliefs and customs a very high percentage of old Bon traditions. The priests of the ¹Na—²khi, called ²Dto—¹mba, employ thread-crosses (*¹Na-²k' wai* in ¹Na-²khi) in a number of ceremonies. As in Tibet, these *¹Na-²k'wai* are regarded as "seats" for either gods or demons. But we also find other beliefs. Thus it is reported in ¹Na-²khi books, that ²Dto-¹mba ²Shi-¹lo (who is identical with the Tibetan *gShen rabs mi bo*, the founder of the Bon religion), was transformed at the moment of his death into a thread-cross, while on the so-called *Ha"-shi-pi*, which is used at funeral ceremonies, ²Dto-¹mba ²Shi-¹lo's horse is figured carrying a *¹Na-²k'-wai*.[14] Another belief is that the ²Ba"¹d'a, the warriors who accompany some of the ¹Na-²khi deities, originated from thread-crosses in the intermediary space between heaven and earth.[15] We should finally notice that drawings of *¹Na-²k'-wai* are often found in the pictographic script of the ¹Na-²khi.

To Dr. Rock we are also indebted for the information that thread-crosses are used by the ancient Hapa sect, members of which are still living in the territory of Muli (*Mi li*) and Yung-ning in Southwest China. The Hapa erect elaborate thread-crosses for averting hail.[16] These structures, called *Nyata* by the Hapa sorcerers, are renewed after three or four years. As Dr. Rock obtained a Hapa manuscript,[17] written in Tibetan and dealing with the ceremony of erecting a thread-cross for the demon-king Pe-dkar we can expect to receive valuable information on this subject later on.

Unfortunately, less is known about the use of thread-crosses among other near or more distant neighbours of the

5:Nebesky-Wojkowitz and Gorer E,J-5 (1937, 1950)1951
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Tibetans. They are reported to be used by the Mongols who call them *ǒngge*, "colour", makhabut "body" or torgaguli "obstacle", the last name certainly refering to their ritual purpose. It seems, however, that their use has become very rare in Mongolia in more recent times.[18]

Other reports show that thread-crosses are used by the Kachin and some of the Naga tribes, especially in death ceremonies, and for averting or destroying evil.[19]

Further to the southwest we find, that thread-crosses are extensively used in the religious ceremonies of the Lepchas of Sikkim. The Lepchas, who adhere today to Tibetan Buddhism, have preserved some practices of their original religion, which—after the name of its priests—is called the Mun religion.[20] Consequently there is a mixture of rites and beliefs of both religions and it is very difficult to state with certainty, which of the rites and religious ideas originated from the Mun or from Lamaism. This situation is made still more complicated by the fact that the Buddhist teachings introduced into Sikkim were those of the unreformed *rNying ma pa*, the "Old Sect", which preserved in its religious practices many customs originating from the Bŏn, which, however, have scarcely been studied up to now.

How closely the Mun religion and Lamaism became associated among the Lepchas is shown by the fact that many of the Lepcha ceremonies are concurrently performed by Mun priests and lamas.

Thread-crosses are called in Lepcha *deu*—corresponding to the Tibetan *Do*, *mDos*—or *Yeu*, an equivalent of the Tibetan *Ye*, *Yas*. As to the meaning of the thread-cross, it is generally regarded by Lepcha lamas as a "seat", "house" or "place" for supernatural beings. The tufts of wool, which are fastened to the thread-cross or are placed on top of bamboo sticks planted near the structure are supposed to represent clouds, surrounding the "palace".

The remainder of this paper consists of details of Lepcha ceremonies in which thread-crosses are used. Some of these ceremonies have already been described and only short accounts will be given of these; in most cases there

5:Nebesky-Wojkowitz and Gorer E.J-5 (1937, 1950) 1951
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crosses is called *ma mo mDos*, "The thread-cross of the *ma mo*" and is dedicated to supernatural beings called *ma mo*. This thread-cross seems to be an especially important form, as there is a special Tibetan book on its construction. The *ma mo's* are represented by Tibetan artists as fierce and terrifying female demons; they are frequently met with in Tibetan iconography, where twelve Great *ma mo's* (*ma mo chhen mo*) accompany Yama (*gShin rje*) as his messengers.[24] Since the *manoo* of the Lepchas is also a female deity and as she has snakes instead of hair and is riding a yawning tiger, she should be regarded as a malignant spirit, most probably belonging or at least related to the *ma mo* group of the Tibetans.

The second syllable in the name of the thread-cross *yam*—seems to correspond to the Tibetan honorific expression for mother, *yum*. This Tibetan word is frequently used in the names of lamaist goddesses and particularly denotes the female consorts or "energies" of Tantric gods. As already mentioned, the word *Deu* corresponds to the Tibetan word *mDos*.

It is interesting to note that this thread-cross is nine-storied, as the number nine is very frequently used in the Bŏn religion, where many of the deities are depicted as nine headed, are placed into groups of nine, etc.[25] The colour of the thread used for constructing the big *Deu*[26] and especially the colour of the four smaller thread-crosses which are planted in the four corners of the topmost square is nearly identical with the colours attributed to the four main quarters of the world by lamaist traditions: East white (or brown), South yellow (blue), West blue-green (red) and North black (yellow).

As for the story of the Tibetan king Dayom it was not possible to find a parallel in Tibetan mythology. But it may be mentioned, that in an old Tibetan record recently made available in a translation by Prof. Tucci, it is said that the king of the *bDud* demons, called *Mi byams pa khrag po*, "The merciless with the bloody face", was living in a black castle with nine storeys or pinacles.[27]

5:Nebesky-Wojkowitz and Gorer E,J-5 (1937, 1950)1951
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It has already been mentioned that some of the symbolism of the Tibetan thread-crosses corresponds to that of the Buddhist Chotens.[1] In the present case the four steps, formed by the bamboo-bracken fern base and the three squares of turf, correspond to the four steps of a Choten. The Lepcha name for these steps, *bangrim*, is identical with the respective Tibetan expression, *bang rim*.

Several of the other implements used in this ceremony are also well known from ancient Tibetan rites. Thus the wooden slabs, which are planted into the turf on the side of the main effigy and which are called *tamsing* by the Lepchas, are identical with the Tibetan *khram shing*, already mentioned. As for the *pong* or *bamgyal*—the former word appears to originate from Lepcha, while the latter was derived from Bŏn terminology—the sticks carrying tufts of wool, we know that wool was used frequently by Bŏn priests. Thus those *bonpos*, who belonged to a sect called *sNang gshen*, had tufts of wool on their foreheads, while those of the *hPhrul gshen*, sect used coloured thread of wool as their emblem. Adherents of the last mentioned sect are reported as having been especially efficient in the construction of *mDos* and *Yas*.[28]

We find a parallel for the connection between arrows and thread-crosses in a recently published *thang-ka* (painted scroll) of the Mongolian war god. On the lower part of this picture there is a hand, consisting of alternating thread-crosses and arrows.[29] Another similarity is perhaps the use of flowers, as a group of "Bŏn flowers" is mentioned in Bŏn scriptures. Finally, the ritual throwing away of the effigies also occurs in an important ancient ceremonies of Bŏn origin, called *lTo* or *gTo*, in which an effigy, regarded as a scape-goat, (*glud*[30]) is thrown away.

2. CEREMONY FOR KEEPING AWAY ILLNESS

At the beginning of the rite a basket is filled with earth and on top of it three concentric, decreasing, square turfs are placed. The basket, arranged in this way, is called

[1] [See cat. 116, p. 67. — Annlyst]

5:Nebesky-Wojkowitz and Gorer E,J-5 (1937, 1950) 1951
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carried out, while the basket and the two wooden plates are dragged along the path to the door. Once in the open, the basket is put in a tree, the *Chien lut* carried away to some other place and the image of Debrong Panoh's mother is thrown into the water-fall of a stream.

This rite contains some of the Bŏn elements mentioned before; further more this thunder and hail demon strongly resembles the appearance of gods as described by the Bonpos. Like many of the Bŏn deities, it is the personification of a natural phenomenon, depicted in the usual Bonpo manner, with nine faces and eighteen hands.

(5) For exorcising an evil spirit, who is causing an illness, several books must be chanted by a lama and two *deu*, called in Lepcha *chemen gedo* and *lumoo gedo* set upon a path. These Lepcha expressions are derived from the Tibetan terms *mTsho sman rgyal mdos* and *kLu mo rgyal mdos*, which are applied for two different kinds of thread-crosses, dedicated to certain groups of Nagas (*kLu*).

(6) While curing the illness, which had befallen a child, a horoscope was cast by a lama and it was decided that besides other rites a red thread-cross, called Tsen Deu, should be constructed. This *deu* is doubtlessly identical with a red *mDos* of the Tibetans, the *bTsan mdos* (pronounced *Tsen do*), which is constructed for averting the evil influence of the red *bTsan* demons.[31]

4. CEREMONY, PERFORMED BY LAMAS AND MUN FOR AVERTING AN ILLNESS

After a Mun has sacrificed an ox, some lamas erect a *torma* and sprinkle consecrated water and then make a tortoise, called *robe* in Lepcha—which corresponds to the Tibetan *Rube*, *Rus sbal*—which is drawn with its belly upward in powdered rice on a large mat. Afterwards, a square with various numbers, called *Miwua* (in Tibetan *sMe ba*)[32], is inscribed upon the body of the tortoise, in the following way:

4	9	6
3	5	1
8	2	7

5:Nebesky-Wojkowitz and Gorer E,J-5 (1937, 1950) 1951
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a bigger container. The father now steps from one square of the drawing to the other; his black cloth is removed when reaching square 7, while a black *yeu*, which was placed upon this square, is replaced by a white one. Then, after exchanging his stick for the bow, he proceeds to square 4, where he stops for a while, sprinkling Lepcha beer over the sick person.

In the last part of the ceremony, twisted pieces of dough are waved over the invalid as well as over those standing nearby, while prayers are chanted by the officiating priest. After making a path of ground rice towards the door, the image of the invalid is carried out together with all the other offerings and laid into the basket which is held ready outside the house. Immediately, the carriers have passed the entrance, the door is shut on them. Finally, the basket with its contents is taken to a river and thrown into the water while in the house of the sick the chanting of prayers is continued.

The ritual here described is again identical in its general outline with the *lTo* ceremonies. Many objects are used, which we identified as being important implements of the Bo'n priests: however, there are also some new elements. Thus the drawing of a tortoise bearing a magic diagram upon its belly often occurs in Tibetan representations, especially on objects used in astrology. In this connection it should be mentioned that among a group of minor Tibetan deities called *Sa bdag*,[35] "earth owners" a cosmic tortoise named *gSer gyi rus sbal*,[36] "the golden tortoise" is mentioned and that other *Sa bdag* are depicted riding tortoises. The Lepchas too regard the tortoise as a cosmic creature; their lamas explain, that the *robe* is living in a subterranean sea and is kept down by the mountain Kanchenjunga, which rests upon its centre.

The peculiar flag, which is placed on top of the bamboo container, is also found upon Tibetan objects, used in rituals performed for the *Sa bdag*. Its Lepcha name—*tarchoh*—corresponds to the Tibetan *Dar lchog*, pronounced *Darcho*.

a small image, which is afterwards connected with the thread-cross. Then the whole structure is offered to Deut-moong and finally somebody, who was designated by the lama, has to take this offering to a place in the forest where it is left to be eaten by animals. This ritual also corresponds to the ancient Tibetan *lTo* rites previously mentioned.[171] In this connection it is interesting to note, that also in Tibet leaves or pieces of paper are placed in the thread-cross, usually in such a manner as to form the main features of a face. Occasionally a ceremonial scarf (*Kha btags*) is draped over the *mDos*.

8. RITE FOR AVERTING INFANTILE DIARHOEA

If several children die of infantile diarhoea, it is assumed that their death was caused by a malignant spirit, called Sande moong. The Lepchas know two ceremonies for appeasing his anger. For the first a black dog is made with a rider on its back and two *yeu*, a black and a white one are placed upon the dog's head, while a red thread-cross is planted behind the rider.

The second ceremony has already been described elsewhere.[39] In this ceremony a life-sized cat with a very long tail is made out of dough. A rider, sitting upon a horse's saddle is placed on its back and four images of men are put in front of and behind the cat. The animal is led by strands of coloured thread, wound around its neck and held by the rider and the images in front. The rider carries a red thread-cross; on the left-front side of the tray a white *Yue* is placed, on the right front a black one, on the right hand rear a white and on the rear left a yellow. To each *Yeu* a *Tamsing* with wool of the same colour as the thread-cross is added.

9. EXORCISM, CALLED DEUT SHAGU KYOB

For curing a person who has fallen ill through the influence of an evil spirit called Hlamen Djeme Pum, a

[See cat. 116 / p. 78. - Analyst]

5:Nebesky-Wojkowitz and Gorer E,J-5 (1937, 1950)1951
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ceremony—which again corresponds to the Tibetan *ITo* rites—is performed.[1] An effigy is offered as substitute for the sick man or woman and afterwards carried far away from the house, in which the invalid lives. During this ceremony, also various thread-crosses are used. The name of this exorcism is nearly identical with the name of a Tibetan ceremony, called Dushel-gugyur (*bDud zhal dgu hsgyur*), "transfering the nine-faced *bDud*- demon". A treatise, composed by the well-known Indo-Tibetan mystic Padmasambhava, describing the performance of this ceremony, is reported to exist in Tibet.

10. KEEPING AWAY ILLNESS AND DEATH FROM A HOUSE

When divination has revealed that a household is in danger of being attacked by spirits of illness and death, a ceremony called Nambo Sagor must be held by the lamas. First a dog's skull is hung over the door by means of a rope, to keep away all diseases which come over the ground. Then a pig's skull is buried under the fire-place, to keep away the diseases above it. While this is done, other lamas chant from books; rice and sacred water are sprinkled and a *torma* as well as a *yeu* are made. This ceremony shows a similarity to the Tibetan rites described by Waddell which are performed to protect a house from the influence of the *Sa bdag*.

11. CURING AN ILLNESS BY MEANS OF THE GO SUM RITE

This is a complicated ceremony, concurrently performed by lamas and Mun priests, during which a hemaphrodite image with three heads is erected. This effigy has a distinctly Tibetan name: it is called Nagpo Gosum (in Tibetan spelling *Nag po mgo gsum*), "the black three-headed one". It has two hands and its three heads seen from left to right, are those of a blue pig, red ox and yellow tiger. Behind the image, three *Yeu* of the same colour as the respective heads, are planted, and two *tamsing* are

[1] [see cat 116, p. 78. – Analyst]

755 778 ●171 placed behind the two upraised arms. A cloth, in its shape similar to that worn by dancers in Tibetan religious dances, is hung upon its shoulders. As a comprehensive description of further details of this image is available elsewhere[40] we would merely draw notice to the detail that the navel of the effigy is formed by a tortoise with a magic diagram upon its belly. This tortoise was described when speaking about the sacrifice to the hail demon Debrong Panoh. This rite also corresponds to the Tibetan *lTo* ceremonies and is regarded by the Tibetans as being purely of Bonpo origin.

12. KILLING THE MALIGNANT SPIRIT AROT MOONG, WHICH CAUSES VIOLENT DEATH

796 778 For this ceremony, a big horse and four smaller ones, all carrying riders on their back are made of millet dough, coloured red. Behind each rider, a red *yeu* together with *pong* sticks is planted and the smaller images are then placed into the four corners of a wooden plate, while the bigger image is put into the centre. In front of this a black figure of the *mamoo* is placed, together with an inflated animal's bladder. Other objects used in this ceremony are symbols of the 12 years cycle, four pots containing scrapings of iron, tree tips, poison and water from five rivers and various crops in leaf plates, prickly plants, and again arrows and spindles. The rest of this ceremony is described in *Himalayan Village* (p. 352). The four red images of riders [776 171] seem to represent spirits, related to or identical with the *bTsan* demons of the Tibetans, who imagine these supernatural beings as ferocious riders of red colour. The red thread-cross would be then the *bTsan mdos* (or *tsen deu* of the Lepchas), as used in rite no 3.

13. THE SHIDOOK KYOB CEREMONY

[794] 796 776 778 If it is assumed that a person's death was caused by the demon called Shidook Moong, the ceremony called Shidook Kyob has to be performed. As this rite has already been

1 [see cat. 116, p. 78. - Analyst]

5:Nebesky-Wojkowitz and Gorer E,J-5 (1937, 1950)1951
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described,[1] we will only note here those details, which are of special interest to our subject. Again, a base is made of layers of earth and in the centre of the topmost square a black thread-cross is planted, while in the four corners four small images together with the same number of *yeu*, in white, yellow, green and red, are placed. Below, 13 other figures together with 13 black thread-crosses, 13 knives, 13 sickles and 13 bows and arrows are arranged. In front of this structure stands a pot with nine handles. Besides encountering here the number nine, which we already identified as the most important number of the Bonpos, we find here the number thirteen mentioned, which is also regarded as a ritual number of this ancient Tibetan faith. As for the name of the demon, to whom the ceremony is dedicated, it sounds very similar to the name of the so-called "foundation owners", the *Shidak* (*gZhi bdag*). They are a group of Tibetan supernatural beings who are supposed to dwell in the earth and when disturbed exercise an evil influence which might prove fatal to men.

It will be seen from the foregoing, that at the present stage, with the material available for comparison, it is impossible to state whether the Bön elements to be found incorporated in Lepcha religious ceremonies came from the original Bön religion, or whether they were introduced into them through the medium of the Red Hat Sect of Tibetan Buddhism.

NOTES

1 Spelled *Bon* in Tibetan. About the Bon religion see H. Hoffmann, *Quellen zur Geschichte der tibetischen Bon Religion*, 1950, and the notes given by Prof. G. Tucci in his magnificent new work *Tibetan Painted Scrolls*, Rome 1949. For a sketch of this ancient Tibetan faith see R. Nebesky-Wojkowitz: Die tibetische Bon Religion, Archiv für Volkerkunde, Vol. II, Vienna 1947, pp. 26-68 (Bibliography).

2 The distribution and use of thread-crosses in various parts of the world were described by W. Foy: *Fadensterne und Fadenkreuze*, I. Ethnologica II Leipzig 1913,, and by G. Lindblom: *Thread-crosses* (*Fadenkreuze*), *particularly in South America and Africa*, Ethnos, Vol. V, nos 3-4, Stockholm 1940.

3 The main works consulted are:

DAS S. CH. : 'The Bon Religion', *JASB*, Calcutta 1881 (p.196)

SCHLAGINTWEIT, E. : 'Le Bouddhisme au Tibet', *Annales du Musee Guimet, Paris* 1881 (Plate XXXVII)

7: Hooker D-5 (1849-1851) 1854
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partners, who wear only one.* When in full dress, the woman's costume is extremely ornamental and picturesque; besides the shirt and petticoat she wears a small sleeveless woollen cloak, of gay pattern, usually covered with crosses, and fastened in front by a girdle of silver chains. Her neck is loaded with silver chains, amber necklaces, &c., and her head adorned with a coronet of scarlet cloth, studded with seed-pearls, jewels, glass beads, &c. The common dress is a long robe of indi, a cloth of coarse silk, spun from the cocoon of a large caterpillar that is found wild at the foot of the hills, and is also cultivated: it feeds on many different leaves, Sal (*Shorea*), castor-oil, &c.

In diet, they are gross feeders;† rice, however, forming their chief sustenance; it is grown without irrigation, and produces a large, flat, coarse grain, which becomes gelatinous, and often pink, when cooked. Pork is a staple dish: and they also eat elephant, and all kinds of animal food. When travelling, they live on whatever they can find, whether animal or vegetable. Fern-tops, roots of *Scitamineæ*, and their flower-buds, various leaves (it is difficult to say what not), and fungi, are chopped up, fried with a little oil, and eaten. Their cooking is coarse and dirty. Salt is costly, but prized; pawn (Betel pepper) is never eaten. Tobacco they are too poor to buy, and too indolent to grow and cure. Spices, oil, &c. are relished.

They drink out of little wooden cups, turned from knots of maple, or other woods; these are very curious on several accounts; they are very pretty, often polished, and mounted with silver. Some are supposed to be antidotes against

* Ermann (Travels in Siberia, ii. p. 204) mentions the Buraet women as wearing two tails, and fillets with jewels, and the men as having one queue only.

† Dr. Campbell's definition of the Lepcha's *Flora ciburia*, is, that he eats, or must have eaten, everything soft enough to chew; for, as he knows whatever is poisonous, he must have tried all; his knowledge being wholly empirical.

7: Hooker D-5 (1849-1851) 1854
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of India proper: all the Himalayan tribes of Sikkim being markedly Mongolian in origin. It does not, however, follow that they are all of Tibetan extraction; perhaps, indeed, none but the Moormis are so. The Mechi of the Terai is decidedly Indo-Chinese, and of the same stock as the savage races of Assam, the north-east and east frontier of Bengal, Arracan, Burmah, &c. Both Lepchas and Limboos had, before the introduction of Lama Boodhism from Tibet, many features in common with the natives of Arracan, especially in their creed, sacrifices, faith in omens, worship of many spirits, absence of idols, and of the doctrine of metempsychosis. Some of their customs, too, are the same; the form of their houses and of some of their implements, their striped garments, their constant and dexterous use of the bamboo for all utensils, their practice of night-attacks in war, of using poisoned arrows only in the chase, and that of planting "crow-feet" of sharp bamboo stakes along the paths an enemy is expected to follow. Such are but a few out of many points of resemblance, most of which struck me when reading Lieutenant Phayre's account of Arracan,* and when travelling in the districts of Khasia and Cachar.

The laws affecting the distribution of plants, and the lower animals, materially influence the migrations of man also; and as the botany, zoology, and climate of the Malayan and Siamese peninsula advance far westwards into India, along the foot of the Himalaya, so do also the varieties of the human race. These features are most conspicuously displayed in the natives of Assam, on both sides of the Burrampooter, as far as the great bend of that river, beyond which they gradually disappear; and none of the

country by the Indo-Germanic conquerors, who are now represented by the Hindoos.

* "Journal of the Asiatic Society of Bengal."

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nor the big flat round Shaman-drum (rnga). For the sacrifice they do not use either the magic dagger (phur-bu) or the thunderbolt (rdo-rje), nor conch trumpets (dung), nor flutes made from human thigh bones (rkang-gling), nor the trident, nor the cup of the human skull (thod-pa). All the above mentioned articles are however indispensable to the Tibetan magicians, the Inner Asiatic and the Siberian Shamans. It is therefore evident, that the Mun and the Bong-thing cannot be identical with the Tibetan Bon-po as some scholars state. They belong rather to that primitive priest class, which has not been influenced by the typical Shamanism which operated in Tibet and spread from there to some Himalayan districts, to Inner and East Asia. The Mun and the Bong-thing are not allowed to practise any black magic as such. This is attributed to them by the neighbouring people, who consequently fear them greatly. During our investigations on this subject we repeatedly heard it said, "Only a wicked and demoralised Mun and Bong-thing would use his powers to harm another person, for their vocation is precisely to help people and to warn off all harm." The Mun wears no prayer cord. When he has to make a prophecy, he calls to his spirit, who comes on to his shoulder and speaks through his mouth. The Bong-thing has a prayer string, which he uses when prophesying. This string however, differs from the Tibetan one and has no definite number of beads.

In the white magic practised by the Lepchas we found many parallels with the ancient Chinese white magic, which had not as yet been influenced by the typical Inner Asiatic Shamanism. There is something in common to both in the matter of casting out demons. The magician compels the demon to enter into a pot of blood. Once the demon is in, he closes the pot and buries it.[87] Their dances have certain characteristics in common with the Wu,—the ancient Chinese magicians. In everything we find the content of the ancient class of magic which was widely spread and which preceded the Inner Asiatic Shamanism. There it received later the typical shaping which today, under the name of Shamanism

87. cfr. Dictionary of the Lepcha Language, op. cit. p. 396 a.b.

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793 wrongly includes all similar phenomena. The Mun and the
789 Bong-thing bear the closest resemblance to the Barwas of the
171 Bhils, the Pariar or Parihar of the Korkus (Central India), the
● Mantravadis of the Parayans and Pulayans (South India), and the Mantravadis of many other primitive tribes of India. We find here a very old class of magicians who have maintained their primitive tradition, and have well established rites and rules.

793 Next in importance to the Mun and the Bong-thing,
[176] the male Pau and the female Andshemu or Nandshemu are to be found among the Lepchas. Both these are said to be Tibetan spirits and are not empowered to perform the great sacrifices. They need the equipment of the Tibetan Shaman :
[178] —thunderbolts, skull-drums, etc. Tibetan influence is clearly evinced in all details. It may be noted that a Mun can also be an Andshemu, *e.g.* Han-bu-ni whom we have mentioned on more than one occasion. When she came forth as an
[78] Andshemu she spoke Tibetan in the trance and employed the Tibetan articles in the performance of the ceremonies. A Bong-thing can at the same time be a Pau, and he uses the Tibetan articles when he presents himself as a Pau. Some investigators have failed to observe this difference, and have in consequence erroneously declared the Mun and the Bong-thing to be identical with the Tibetan Bon-po. Gorer failed to perceive this important distinction, and hence there occur in his work, statements which are contradictory to the observations we have made. He states, for example, that the Mun are only female. We have taken great pains to verify that there are both male and female Mun. He calls the Bong-thing "Padem," who was supposed to represent a Tibetan spirit.
[177] This, however, indicates the extent to which Tibetan influence has extended in the area, particularly as the district in which Gorer carried out his research lay further north, to the Tibetan frontier. Gorer considers the Bong-thing to be weaker than the Mun, which again is not true in the districts in which we carried out our research. He draws a distinction between two kinds of Mun ; the good Tang-li Mun, the white magician, and the bad Mun-mook Mun, the black magician. Gorer
[154] however admits that whether one belongs to one type or to the other, depends upon the teacher from whom the instruction

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small Nepalese cattle is called Pahare-gay in Nepalese and Nam-tha in Lepcha. The Tibetan Yak is called Tschangri-gay in Nepalese, and Yok-big in Lepcha. The water buffalo is Arna in Nepalese and Nin-big in Lepcha. The names Gaur and Gayal, as we see, do not appear.

The Mithan sacrifice and cult play a very important part in the religious sphere of the Nagas. The Sema Nagas call the wild Mithan "aviela," the cross of this wild cattle with the domesticated cattle is "avi"; the cross of avi achuka (black humped cattle) is aselhu, the cross Avi with Kolaghu (ordinary cattle) is avyega or vivghu.

In the Chongli (C) and Mongsen (M) dialect of the Ao Naga, cross of the wild bull and the cow is called sü and atsü (M); the ordinary cow nashi (C) and masü (M); the progeny of the above cross and the ordinary cow mukza (C & M).[87] We suppose that all the natives have such special names and that they certainly draw a distinction between the different varieties of animals. The confusion arose from the fact that the Europeans and Indians regarded the Mithan and Gayal as one (*Bos frontalis*). The wild Mithan and the Gaur are different local variations of the same animal. Apart from this, it is clear that the two different wild breeds do not overlap each other in their geographical distribution. This would have been the case if the Mithan and Gaur were two different species of wild cattle. East of the Bay of Bengal the Banteng (*Bos sondaicus*) appears as a new breed.[88]

The names Gaur and Gayal originate from Hindi. The Sanskrit root "go" means bull and cow; and gavah, the plural, cattle. The modern Hindi name is derived from these: gay and gau, cow; gava, wild cattle, from which gaur is derived; gavya and gayaval—"that which appertains to the cow." Gayal is then derived from gayaval, as the bastard is not the ordinary type of cattle but is associated with the cow.

87. J. P. Mills, The Ao Nagas, London 1926, p. 132 sq.

88. E. C. Baker, The Gaur and the Gayal, (Bos gaurus and bos frontalis), The Journal of the Bombay Natural History Society, Vol. xv, 227 sq., T. E. Livesey, The Gayal or Mithan (Bos frontalis), id. Vol. p. 199 sq., W. S. Thom, Some notes on Bison (Bos gaurus) in Burma, id. Vol. p. 108 sq., W. T. Blanford, On the Gaur (Bos gaurus) and its allies, from the Proceedings of the Zoological Society of London, Journal of the Bombay Natural History Society, Vol. VI, 1891, 222, seq., M. Hermanns, Were animals first domesticated and bred in India? Journal of the Bombay Branch Royal Asiatic Society, Vol. XXVII, Pt.11, 1952, p. 134 sq.

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136 Gaval and Arna are the Hindi names for the water-
[71] buffalo. In Bombay State, as far as the Central Provinces
the name Ran bhainsa, water buffalo, is used for Gaur. In
Mahrathi, it is pronounced gavya ; in Tamil, katuerimai ;
in Malayalam, karthu ; in Kanarese, kar-kona.[69]

[231 The wild Gaur and the Mithan cannot be tamed. The
232] Gayal, which is wrongly called the Mithan, has no wild
ancestor, but is only a cross between the wild bull and the
domesticated cow. A clear proof of the mongrel character-
istics of the Gayal is this : In districts where the Gaur are
numerous and therefore more frequently mate with the domes-
tic cows, the Gayal shows some resemblance to the Gaur,
—the massive build with high backbone, etc. Through the
constant adding of wild blood this characteristic is preserved,
e.g. in the upper mountains of Assam. In districts where the
Gaur are rare as for instance in the Chin hills, the build of the
mongrel is smaller, the ridge at the back disappears, the
dewlap grows larger and the horns more like those of the cows.
By the fourth generation the maternal component of the or-
dinary cattle is again quite dominant.[70] In these circumstances
one should no longer look for the wild ancestors of the Gayal.

224 There is also a species of animals which the Rong do not
262 kill, *viz.* the wild dog which is reddish in colour. Nor are
825 they allowed to eat the flesh of tame dogs and horses. In this
respect they are on par with the Tibetans.

776 There are legends pertaining to other curious creatures
which are supposed to live in the thick virgin forests. Bōn-
mān-che is the Nepalese name ; a "Wild man" who is said
to be about as large as a great monkey. The Lepcha name
for this creature is Sog-pa. Another being is the Bōn-sacri,
the "Wild magician." This creature is believed to kidnap
the children of men and lead them away into the depths of the
forest, where it instructs them in the arts of magic and makes
them so accustomed to the wild forest life that they shun the
company of men. The wives of the Bōn-sacri are the Lidini,
[782] the "Wild wives." The Rong hunter must be proof against
the attacks of all these beings, and so he pays tribute to and

69. S. H. Prater, Indian Animals, Bombay, p. 204.
70. S. H. Prater, op. cit. p. 201 sq.

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796 782 after the sowing of each of their grains, they are offered sakyou-faat to ensure a good harvest.

Only the three crops are connected with the people of [241 776] Mayal; the others come from different supernaturals, barley, wheat, buckwheat, and wet rice come from Kongen-bu, the god of Kinchenjunga, a Sikkimese deity; no important ceremonies are connected with these crops. Cardamum, as has already been said, comes from Nepal and is under the patronage of the foreign Elaiji-nyou, who dislikes women, in particular menstruating women. The people of Mayal are said to share [841] this dislike and should a menstruating woman visit them there would be the terrible result that all the people of Mayal would fall asleep and would not send the migratory birds."[71]

The spring sacrifice is simple. The autumn sacrifice on the contrary is very copious. For this an old experienced man is elected to represent the ancestors of Mayal and he is called Mayal-mu. A woman is selected to represent the Talyeu-mu, the sister earth. When the ceremony cannot be completed on the same day, those taking part in it stay with each other for the night. There is free intercourse [786 833 171] between the sexes; however, the comprehensive ban on incestual relations is not broken. This recalls the sexual freedom which is indulged in at the festivals of Spring and Autumn among many Asiatic peoples and which we observed in the Tibeto-Chinese province Tsing-hai among Chinese, Tujen Tibetans, etc. The representation of ancestors and agricultural spirits by masquerading in their guise is again a well-known custom among Asiatic primitives usually connected with the New Year festivals. Thus the sacrifices of the hunters and of the cultivators stand out in sharp contrast with each other.

The Lepcha, Suliman, gave us informatin about another family sacrifice to the Supreme God, Ta-she-thing. Anyone who knows the rites may perform it, whether it be a man or [262] a woman. The one who performs it must fast for three days before the ceremony, *i.e.* he must not eat the chief meal of rice but he can eat the other dishes. During this time he must [315] take three baths. The bathing place is prepared near the

71. Gorer, op. cit. 238 sq.

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of the Rong. It belongs therefore to their old ancestral estate, and is not borrowed from other peoples.

In the Soma-Haoma sacrifices of the Indians and the Iranians, we find striking parallels. "The conception of a stimulating drink of the gods appears to go back to the Indo-European times. The drink which manifests secret, ecstatic, and exciting power to men, must be an essence of the gods, and a special possession of the gods... The dwelling place of this drink of the gods appears to have been heaven according to Indo-European beliefs.... From its heavenly storage place, the bird of the god, or the god himself in the guise of a bird, fetched or stole it from the jealously watching demons; the eagle of Indra; the nectar carrying eagle of Zeus; Odin who as an eagle carried away mead.... Finally it may perhaps be accepted, that the conception of godlike immortality is already connected at the time of the Indo-Europeans with the drink of the gods (Amrta, Ambrosia). As human life is preserved by taking meat and drink and specially death is warded off for a time, at least by medicine, so must the godly existence also depend on the partaking of a drink whose essence is immortality."[74]

The sacrifice as the nourishment of the gods is known to the Rong. "Then Tashey-takbo-thing wished to make his first sacrifice to the Rum and called the ngo and the ngo-yong....

At the offering time the hands and feet of the Tashey-takbo-hing quarrelled with his belly saying, 'We work very hard the whole time, but you, the belly, do nothing.' And the belly replying said, 'Very well then, as you believe that, for two or three days I shall really do nothing. I will rest and shall not eat anything.'

Then the hands became so weak they could do nothing, and were soon unable to move. And the belly said, 'If you find me something to eat, you will find you regain strength and vigour.' And as he ate a little the hands and feet regained strength, and they knew they were defeated. So they planted sugar-cane (mut pa-mam), pine-apples (bor-pot) and all kinds of fruit which grew abundantly.

74. H. Oldenberg, Die Religion des Veda, Stuttgart-Berlin 1917, p. 100 sq.

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And Tashey-takbo-thing took a supply of all these fruits with many fish from the river and sacrificed them. This was the commencement of all offering."[78]

Thus among the Rong, as among the Indo-Iranians the stimulating drink, finally becomes a deity. "Further, the sacrificial drink filled with daemonic strength,—like the sacrificial fire—has become a mighty god."[78]

But Soma-Haoma is however most intimately bound up with cattle. "Soma is dressed in the cow robe—the admixture of milk in it."[78a] We noticed, among the Rong, the butter decoration on the bowl of Chi.

Significant also is the rite by which the Lepchas place the offering of Chi on the forehead of the bull, and so bind more closely together the cult of the stimulant with cattle. All the same both cults remain autonomous and independent. This is of special value as it throws more light on the old Indo-Iranian ritual and sacrifices. Some scholars today think it is possible to connect the following :

"The cult of the killing of the Soma in the form of little plant shoots in the Vedic sacrifice and the myth of the killing of the Haoma bull in the mythology of Mithra have a broad ethnological connection, and are the Aryan shaping of an ancient prehistorical mythology and cult....Now if Zarathustra repeatedly declaims with passion and holy anger against the slaughtering of bulls it is not, as has been maintained, for agricultural and utilitarian reasons, but because this ritual act formed the essential constituent part of the old religion. Now within the Soma sacrifice, the highest and most solemn sacrifice of the old Indians, it is clear that the offering of a gift to the gods was not the most essential thing, but the renewal of the original sacrifice of the gods. As the gods in heaven prepare the Soma rain for the good of the world, so does man in the holy ceremony prepare the drink of immortality which stands for rain as the source of life, in order to share in the blessing of the godlike original sacrifice and to make sure of it for himself. And for all the slaughtering of beasts and men, which

78. Stocks, op. cit. p. 358.
78. H. Oldenberg, op. cit. p. 172.
78a. op. cit. p. 178.

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Chi, rouse themselves into a state of ecstasy, and then began their dances and their soul-wanderings in a state of ecstasy.

A brief description of the manner in which the Rong prepare the intoxicating drink would not be out of place here. Chi is obtained from the small millet. The well-ripened grains are dried in the sun for three days, and then cooked in an earthenware pot which is covered over with a bamboo mat. A larger barrel is inverted over this. After the cooking, the ferment is added, and the fermentation begins. The fermented liquor is left in the sun for several days so that the alcoholic content may become stronger. Finally the grains are squeezed out and the chi-brew is thus obtained. The fermenting grains are then put into a bamboo barrel and warm water is poured over them. This water becomes slightly alcoholic and is sucked in through a little bamboo tube. The method of drinking beer through a little bamboo tube, in order to avoid the impure sediment, is a very old custom indeed, and had been practised by the Hittites. It is a universal practice among the Himalayan peoples.

The other type of alcoholic beverage, Dyō, is made from medicinal roots, herbs, or other fermentable plants. The preparation would depend on the material used in each case. The roots are soaked in warm water, the fermenting agent is added and the whole concoction allowed to ferment. After a few days the molasses is squeezed out. It seems that the preparation of the Soma was similar, but the secret of the extraction has been lost.

The home of the Soma plants is supposedly the high rocky mountains. "Soma on the rocks"[79]; the eagle robs Soma from the rocks.[80] It is "an inhabitant of the mountains," a "growth of the mountain world."[81] In one place the name for such a mountain is said to be Mujevat.[82] According to the Mahabharata (XIV) this was a mountain to the rear of the Himalayas. The plant was also a medicine and was called "Medicine for the sick."[83] The medicinal effect was so

79. Rigveda V, 85, 2.
80. op. cit. I, 93, 6.
81. X, 68, 4; XV, 9, 95, 4.
82. X, 34. 1.
83. Rigveda VIII, 72, 17.

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potent that it even brought about immortality.[84] The motif of "Medicine of Immortality" which is widely circulated through the whole of Asia is an effective argument in this case. According to this, Soma was a kind of medicinal plant which grew in the highest mountains. 273 171

In those early days, no Indo-Aryans lived in this mountain world. It is more probable that from the very early time they obtained medicinal roots and herbs from the inhabitants of the mountains. In the Atharvaveda it is said, "The young maid of the Kirati race, a young damsel, digs the drug ; digs it with shovels wrought of gold on the high ridges of the hills."[85] The Kirati however are a people related to the Tibetans, as we shall see later on, and their name is identical with the Rai as we have mentioned above. The expression "kirata-tikta" occurs in Sanskrit and means "A very bitter medicinal plant." The name is preserved in the Prakrit as Cilaa-itta or Ciraa-itta ; in Old-Bengal as Cirayita and in New-Bengal as Cirata or Cireta. It certainly means "Medicine of the Kirata."[86] The Soma plant and its juice were equally bitter. It is reported that the Kirati provided the Aryans with Soma plants. If they grew in the high Himalayan mountains there was certainly no other way of obtaining the plants except through the natives who had a knowledge of medicinal herbs.

It is naturally impossible to produce a commonly used popular drink from a rare plant which had to be transported from a great distance. Oldenberg raises the same question from an altogether different point of view, "Has Soma ever been a favourite drink in the daily life of the Aryans? I doubt it...In the Veda, Soma certainly was not a favourite drink, and it seems to me that the Avestic sources also teach this. The real intoxicating drink in the ordinary life of the ancient Indian peoples was sura...

Sura was put to sacred use at the ceremonies of the Sautramani as also of the Vajaya."[87] Even the Soma sacrifices were not numerous, or greater quantities of Soma plants would

84. op. cit. I, 91, 6 ; VIII, 48, 3 ; IX, 113, 8.
85. S. K. Chatterji, Kirata-Jana-Krti, Journal R. A. S. B. Vol. XVI, 1950. No. 2. p. 163.
86. op. cit. p. 163.
87. H. Oldenberg, op. cit. p. 366.

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273 171 have been used. "Only for a few, the celebrations of the Soma sacrifice could have been possible; where it was celebrated it could only have had for the masses of the people at most, the character of an incomprehensible play which they watched; the functions leaving the onlookers unmoved."[88] A drink so easily obtained and in general use, would not have so easily been linked with the "Drink of Immortality."

The Soma plants were ground down according to primitive methods on a stone plate by means of a stone, and later crushed in a stone mortar.[89] Then the juice was squeezed out. This juice was of a brownish, reddish, or greeny-yellowish colour. To purify this juice it was run through a strainer made of sheep's wool.[90] The Iranians used a strainer made of hair from the holy white bull. During the process three priests chant a monotonous hymn. The juice was very frequently mixed with water, milk or sour milk.[91]

It was poured back and forth into different barrels. All the manipulations would certainly cause the fermentation of the juice, as it did have an intoxicating effect.[92]

All this goes to show that Soma was quite a rare intoxicating drink. The ordinary intoxicant of the ancient Indians was Sura, which was also used for the purpose of the sacrifice. Here, too, we have an exact parallel with the Lepchas;—millet beer, Chi, is the ordinary stimulant which is generally used for the sacrificial purpose as it is easily obtained. Dyō is made from medicinal roots and is of a brownish colour. The alcohol content is high like some of our modern liqueurs. Because of the rarity of the roots, Dyō is not often manufactured and is less frequently used in sacrifices. Soma must have been extracted from some similar medicinal root. The Himalayan peoples gave it to the Aryans and handed over to them the recipe for making it.

This of course does not prove that the sacrifice of the intoxicating drink was introduced by the Aryans in this manner.

88. op. cit. p. 449 sq.
89. Rigveda IX. 67, 19, 107, 10; I, 28, 1-3.
90. Rigveda IX. 69. 9.
91. Rigveda VII. 3, 6.
92. Cfr. H. Oldenberg, op. cit. p. 457 sq., S. K. Godivala, Indo-Iranian Religion, Bombay, 1925, p. 5. sq.

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"The idea of the stimulating drink of the gods appears to go back to Indo-European times."[93] There it was the old honey mead. Instead of mead the Aryans used Soma when they settled in India which they came to know through the Himalayan peoples, among whom intoxicating drinks had a similar significance.

The present day customs and practices of the Lepchas are a commentary on the old customs. Among all the Southern Himalayan peoples the Lepchas, as far as we could see, were the only ones who have knowledge of the plant and know the art of making the intoxicating drink from it. The Tibetans call the drink of immortality "dud-rtzi"; it is nectar or ambrosia. Literally it means the devil's drink. They use the name ho-ma by which they mean a butter-burnt-offering; ho-ma-byed-pa means, usually, to offer. The Tibetans say "ho-ma" which is related to the Iranian "haoma" and not to the Sanskrit "soma"; moreover the expression "devil's juice" is a defamatory appellation. Exactly the same did Zarathustra with the Haoma drinking bout. These two facts seem to indicate that the Tibetans have in this, as in many other ways, imbibed the Iranian heritage.

The sagas of the Great Flood offer us another parallel. We can differentiate two main motifs; *a*) the cause of the flood, *viz.* the damming of the waters by the snake king, and *b*) the freeing of the waters when the demon was smashed to pieces and the saving of the human couple.

The Rong relate the following: "Then Paril-bu, who was the Serpent-king, dammed the rivers by lying in them, and they overflowed and rose to a great height and reached the sky... Tashey-thing sent a hero down into the world called the Yong-li-pone to kill the serpent who was blocking the rivers. The hero cut the serpent in pieces, thus making the waters run down the plains."[94]

Veda (I·32) describes how Vrtra, the snake demon, closed the passage of the waters so that they could not flow away. Indra came to battle, overwhelmed the snake-demon

93. H. Oldenberg, op. cit. p. 169.
94. Stocks, op. cit. p. 358.

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and cut it to pieces. Then he cleared the path for the waters so that they could flow freely into the sea.[98]

Indra-Vrtra corresponds to the Iranian Tishtar-Apaosha. After the fight between them both had raged with unabated fury for three days, he appeared weary and about to give in. Whereupon he cried, "If men would perform sacrifices, I still could win." They therefore offered the Haoma sacrifice because of which the hero gained strength and conquered the demon. Indra had also obtained superb strength through the drinking of Soma. In the Rong myths the stimulant Chi had to be offered to God in order that he might be passified and let the floods abate. As the serpent is again linked in another way with the flood, the snake king as leader of the river Rung-nyo and the subsequent flood;—we do not believe that the Rong have, in this case, taken over Vedic Hindu myths, but have handed down, independently, their own legends, which are very slightly influenced by modern Hinduism.

The second motif is the saving of a pair or of a few people, who either saved themselves by taking refuge on a mountain-top or in a vessel. We have acquainted ourselves earlier with the Rong legend (page 40 sq.). In Atharvaveda (19·39·8) this event is recorded as having occurred in the Himalayas, "There was the arrival of the vessel ; there was the peak of the Himalayas ; there was immortality in sight ; there grows the Kushta grass." Shatapatha Brahmana (1·8·1/10) describes how Manu was saved in a ship. According to the Vendidad of the Iranians, Jamshed (Yima) was locked up in a "vara" by Ahura-Mazda, the Supreme God, in order that he might be saved from the great flood.

As the myths of the flood occur among so many Asiatic peoples (in the Near, Middle and Far East) there is no conclusive parallel about the saving of mankind as described in the myths of the Rong and Indo-Iranians. These legends could be drawn from several sources.

In the cult of the Rong, the sacrificing of bulls plays an outstanding part. For both, the living (during illness) and for the dead (in funeral ceremonies), the bulls must lose their

98. Cfr. H. Oldenberg, op. cit. p. 133 sq.

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lives. The same is true of the different important sacrifices offered in the course of the year.

On the contrary one of the traditions has it that the oldest material for offerings were Chi, the intoxicating drink, dried fish, and small birds. According to other traditions the number of objects is somewhat increased. "Every year we give fish (ngo), game (fo), rice-chi (mor-chi), beaten rice (ta-fa) and ginger (hing.) These are put on banana leaves and are offered at Shara near the Tulung monastery."[96] Another legend is as follows: "Tashey-takbo-thing took a supply of all these fruits with many fish from the rivers and sacrificed them. This was the commencement of all offerings."[97] This gives us an insight into the sacrificial practices of a people who live on game and the spoils of the chase, who offer the spoils and the collected eatable plants and fruits. The god of the hunt, Pong-rum, commanded the hunters to perform sacrifices to him.[98]

Completely different are the sacrifices of cattle, pigs and goats which are most closely linked up with the Mun-Bong-thing religion, as we have already seen from the reports of these priests.[99] But as these sacrifices are a very old custom of the Rong, it is obvious that the cattle offerings are old too. The cattle are, indeed, the Asiatic mountain Zebu, which have small horns and a rudimentary hump. In these days the Lepchas practise various methods of killing the victims. "Cattle are usually killed with a bow and arrow, shooting from very near, sometimes they are stoned or killed with a pointed knife. Pigs and goats are killed with a pointed knife if there is one, otherwise with a piece of sharpened bamboo."[100] The cattle are killed at the same time by the blow of an axe in the nape of the neck.

The sacrificing of cattle plays an important part in the ritual of many Asiatic mountain people. The Northern Sangtam tribe in Assam are familiar with such sacrifices during which beer is an important stimulant. Among the

96. Stocks, op. cit. p. 358.
97. op. cit. p. 356.
98. Cfr. above p. 77.
99. Cfr. p. 58 sq.
100. Gorer, op. cit. p. 105.

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796 782 171 Lakher, the Mithan must be shot with the bow and arrow. These sacrifices are common among the different Naga tribes.[101] Lepchas, who during the war came to these parts of the country, state that the practices of these people are in many ways similar to and in harmony with their own practices.

We find the sacrificing of bulls common to the Thai, the Lolo, the Na-chi and the Tibetans. Cattle and pigs were of primary importance among the animal offerings of ancient China. In Iran, Zarathustra waged fanatical warfare against the cattle killers. In the "Bull Gatha" (29) the soul of the bull complains to the gods that cattle are handed over to the murderous lust of men and prays for help and protection. Ahura-Mazda calls on Zarathustra to provide some protection for the cattle. At the time when the Aryans in India still preserved their nomadic tedencies, they offered bull sacrifices. Aitareya Brahmana (11·1·8) says that men at first had the horse as the principal sacrificial animal. Later, cattle took the place of the horse ; the sheep replaced the cow, and in the end cats replaced the sheep. Ultimately, however, plant offerings totally ousted the animal offerings. This is however a subsequent construction. The sacrifices of cattle occur still in modern India and the Brahmins who perform the sacrifice in South India must also eat the flesh that has been offered, and by doing so, they do not violate the rules of the caste.

Already in the Mohenjodaro culture the pictures of bulls are linked with the name of the deity Kusi, Ikusi; they are of the greatest significance and could only originate from the cult motifs. Thus the Rong sacrifices of the bull contribute greatly to the significance which the bull-cult has for mankind.

Very interesting parallels occur between the hunting rites and sacrifices of the Lepchas on the one hand, and the primitive Indian tribes and North-East Asiatic peoples on the other. Just as the Rong believe that their hunt-god, [776] Pong-rum, incarnates himself in the form of bears, the

101. C. R. Stoner, The Feasts of Merit among the Northern Sangtam Tribes of Assam, Anthropos, Freiburg, 1950, Vol. XLV p. 1 sq.

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Jakuts, the Sojots, Tungus, etc., regard the bears as deities.[102] These people have almost developed a pronounced bear cult.

This certainly is not the case with the Rong ; but even they hold the bear in high esteem and consider it to be the most intelligent and clever of all the wild animals, nay, with traits that bear has a resemblance to human beings. The bear is taboo among some Indian tribes.

The women-folk of these tribes, like the Lepcha women, are strictly excluded from all contact with the game that has been captured for the sacrifice. "The relationship of woman to game is especially delicate among all Siberian peoples. Especially during menstruation or pregnancy, she may easily ruin the luck when men go on a hunt. Further, in her heedlessness she can cause the animals to shy off to another district."[103] When the game is being conveyed into the house, a meeting with women must be avoided at all costs. Some tribes do not even permit the game to be taken in through the door because women pass in and out of it. The game is brought in through a window or some other aperture.[104] It is customary among the Golden, as also among the Irulas, not to permit a woman to look at the head of the bear, just as the Rong conceal the head of the game from the eyes of woman. Thus there occur among the hunting people who are now so widely scattered, very great similarities in the hunting rites and usages. The same can be said of their arts of magic.

This similarity is markedly evident in the case of the Mun and Bong-thing of the Rong and the Siberian Shamans. The only difference is, as we have already pointed out, that the Rong do not employ the individual Shaman instruments such as the Shaman drums and the magic daggers. The Lepchas have certainly preserved the older form. The vocational calling of the Siberian Shamans and the Rong-Mun is closely allied. Both men and women are elected. "Werbitskij mentions in his decription of Shamanism in the Altai district, that the Shaman gift is at the same time an

102. U. Harva, Die religiösen Vorstellungen der altaiischen Völker, Helsinki 1938, p. 407 sq.
103. U. Harva, op. cit. p. 412.
104. op. cit. p. 414 sq.